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AN ARMENIAN WEDDING.

By G. B. BURGIN.

NINETY-ONE men and boys of all ages are seated together in double rows. The room is decorated in the usual Armenian fashion, with mirrors, carpets, divans. Bowls of blue china stand on ledges close to the ceiling. These are heirlooms, and must not be broken for fear of ill-luck. There is a gaudy chandelier in the middle of the room, surmounted by a glass peacock, and tin seconces shine dully through the thick haze of tobacco smoke.

As I enter, with as little noise as possible, every one rises effusively. According to oriental ideas of etiquette, a certain amount of importance in one's demeanour is indispensable. The Orientals have no notion that it can pay to respect a man who does not respect himself; and, therefore, if a Pasha of two tails visits you, you should demean yourself as if you were a Pasha of three. This may not be a very gentlemanly rule of conduct; but it is one which is almost indispensable.

A one-eyed gentleman in a blue dressing-gown assures me that it is the proudest day of his life to welcome such a distinguished guest in Mardin. A window is opened to let the smoke clear away, and with two hundred and seventy-three movements of the right arm I salute the ninety-one guests.

The bridegroom's father takes his place below a burly Turk with a mole on his forehead—a Mohammedan is always entitled to sit above a Christian. Then come six Turkish officers, then a boy sucking a cigarette, and a Kurd chief, who, on consideration of receiving a big present, has promised not to molest the bride and bridegroom. He has fine aquiline features, small ears, and tiny feet. His dress consists of a silk turban blazing with false brilliants, striped silk trousers, and a gold-laced, tight-fitting jacket. A natty black lambskin over-jacket fits closely to his shoulders, and a crimson sash, studded with silver-hilted daggers, encircles the waist of this hand-

some dare-devil. Next to the Kurd sits a solemn-looking fire-worshipper, in closely-fitting black cloth jacket, trousers, and astrakhan cap.

The proceedings commence with a small glass of mastic (a most evil-smelling spirit) all round, including the boy. Then come the musicians; they are shabby and mournful, and their discordant melodies sound like the howling of a pack of wolves. Then there is a solo on an Arabic harp. The performer is so energetic, his little parchment-covered fingers so active, his tum-tiddly-tum-tiddly-tum so rapid, and his despair at the conduct of one Fatima so great that we are full of sympathy when he declares his intention of quaffing the flowing bowl which she hands to him even should it contain poison; for one glance from her eyes can transform the deadliest draught into life-giving nectar. And so on, until the Kurd and the Persian volunteer a dance.

The Kurd takes the Persian's right hand in his left. They commence proceedings with a 'one-two-three, one-two-three, hop, skip, and jump,' to which they add a vocal accompaniment.

'What are they singing about?' I ask, after fifteen minutes of this monotonous performance.

'The death of a Kurd prince.'

After another quarter of an hour has elapsed I make the same inquiry.

'Oh, Effendi, the death of another Kurd prince.'

After supper, which is served on an enormous circular tray supported by a low stool, we return to the salon.

Shriller and shriller ring out the flageolets in the courtyard. Tambourine and guitar players jostle each other; a thrill of excitement lights up the impassive countenances of the spectators. 'What are they going to do?' I ask. 'Where's the bridegroom?'

'Effendi, they are going to dress him. By Allah, he cometh.'

A brawny barber, his arms bare to the elbow, bustles in. His assistant carries a chair, over which is spread a flowered towel. Then enters a procession. The bridegroom, his countenance

of ashen pallor (it has been floured for the occasion), totters along supported by sympathising friends.

After he is shaved by the barber, a variety of costly and wonderful garments are put upon him, all of them gifts from his fair Genira. Fourteen of the bridegroom's brothers, each holding a candle in the right hand, strip him to the skin, and then re-clothe him—new undergarments, three green silk waistcoats, a blue silk robe, sash, flowered white satin overcoat, two jackets over that, a long loose blue robe, and a new fez. The stockings, however, do not fit, and the bridegroom grumbles. Then he kisses my hands, and sits down beside me on the divan.

'I suppose you're very happy?' I somewhat infelicitously ask, not knowing how to begin.

He smiles as if in pain.

'You love your bride very much?'

'Very much indeed.'

'What's her name?'

'Effendi, I forget.'

Fortunately, at this juncture the music again strikes up in the courtyard, and dancing begins with great spirit around two bonfires—the women at one, and the men at the other. A group of old women squat on the housetop. In another corner of the courtyard the flames throw a Rembrandtish light upon a group of withered crones.

Six beautiful Armenian girls, carrying bundles of the bride's clothes on their heads, take their places at a third fire. They are small and slight, with melting dark eyes, voluptuous forms, and tiny hands. They whirl round and round, blazing with gold and silver coins, in a kind of waltz step, their short blue robes displaying beautifully moulded ankles. Most of them wear blue muslin veils, strings of pearls in their long, braided tresses, and heavy gold bangles on wrists and ankles. Their dancing embodies the poetry of motion. Now darting soft, languishing looks upon the spectators, now revolving around each other with parted lips and flashing eyes, they are alike attractive and beautiful in their unaffected enjoyment and artless desire to please.

Near the dancers stand several old women who utter at intervals a peculiarly shrill cry, thereby invoking all good influences upon the happy couple.

To-morrow evening the bride, surrounded by her friends, will go to the church-door on horseback: the bridegroom walks. On their arrival the priest will come to the porch and explain to bride and bridegroom the obligations of matrimony. The procession will then march slowly round the church, preceded by players on bells and cymbals. On reaching the altar, the bride and bridegroom's foreheads will be placed in juxtaposition, and their heads tied together with gold chains. The bride keeps herself veiled for three days, and is not left alone with her husband until this time has elapsed.

But now there is no more feasting or giving in marriage with these poor people. Their bridegroom is Death—Famine and Pestilence attend him; and the murderous monster who sits upon the throne of Islam smiles cynically,

surrounds himself with a vast army, and devises fresh methods by which he may exterminate the whole Armenian race. 'How long, O Lord, how long?'

THE FASCINATION OF THE KING.

CHAPTER IX. (continued).

WHEN their king had crossed before them and it was realised that he intended personally leading them to victory, a yell of joy went up, and it was instantly noticeable that the great mass pushed on even faster than before. I was riding just behind the king, perhaps fifty yards in advance of the fighting line. If anything, my horse was a better one than his, and I had all my work cut out to keep him in his place. The excitement of that charge I cannot hope to make you understand. I had never experienced anything like it before, and I don't suppose I ever shall again. The rush through the crisp air, the roar of the battalions behind me, the wild lust of fighting that was rising in my heart, the total abandonment of all care, and the one set desire to come to close quarters with the foe, were sufficient to produce a peculiar kind of intoxication in which every emotion and every thought seemed quite distinct and enjoyable.

A few seconds now would bring us to close quarters with the foe; already I could see them crouched behind their works waiting to receive us. At this range the execution done by their guns was terrible in the extreme. It seemed to me impossible that any man could live to reach that glittering line of bayonets. And yet, strange to relate, even while that thought was in my mind, I was conscious of no fear. If every other man in our army behind me were killed, it seemed certain that I should escape scot-free. I can only suppose that this must be the case with most men under similar conditions, otherwise no human being would surely be insane enough to run such awful risks.

For upwards of a hundred yards from the base of the hill, the plain was strewn with large rocks. In some places they were so close together that to go straight forward was a most difficult, if not well-nigh impossible proceeding. The pace, however, at which we were travelling rendered it an equally hard matter to turn to right or left. Under these circumstances, we were perchance compelled to continue in as straight a line as possible, dodging the obstacles in our way as best we might. This erratic course was destined to prove my doing or undoing, as I cared to consider it, for in endeavouring to avoid one rock I crashed into another, and the result was eminently disastrous. My horse leapt into the air in an endeavour to clear it, caught it full and fair upon his chest, and turned an almost complete somersault, throwing me over his head, and rolling upon me when he had got me on the ground. I have a vague recollection of crawling under the shelter of the rock to avoid being trampled on, of observing the troops go panting by, and of seeing a young man have his head severed from his body by a shell, and the former come rolling and pitching

towards me, before I lost consciousness and remember no more of what happened.

It must have been upwards of half an hour later when I opened my eyes again. To my surprise, I discovered that I was lying beneath a tree on the same palm-topped hill where I had been standing with the king and the general commanding when the battle had commenced. His Majesty was kneeling by my side with an anxious face, and one of the medical staff was feeling my pulse. As soon as they saw that I was once more conscious, a glass of brandy and water was given to me, and under the influence of this stimulant I was soon myself again, though wofully weak and sore.

'What has happened?' I asked of the king as soon as I could speak. 'Did we capture the position?'

'We have been victorious all along the line,' he answered. 'The enemy are now in full retreat.'

'Thank God,' I said. 'Your Majesty has won a victory to-day of which any nation might be proud.'

When I was able to move, I rose, and leaning on the king's arm, for I was still extremely shaky, looked across the battle-field. Already the ambulance corps were hard at work collecting the wounded of both sides and conveying them to the impromptu hospitals which had been erected on the hill adjoining Du Berg's headquarters. The enemy's strong position on the other side of the plain, as well as the batteries to right and left of it, had fallen into our hands, while a large supply of arms and ammunition had become our property. The army, flushed with its success, was prepared for anything, so the king informed me, and could with difficulty be restrained from following the foe into the jungle to which they had retreated.

Leaving the knoll, we descended to the headquarters' hut in order to recover ourselves after the exertions of the day. The sun was now directly overhead, and we had tasted no food since daylight. Having satisfied our hunger, we laid ourselves down, and in my case I know that in less than a minute I was as fast asleep as I had ever been in my life.

When I woke it was three o'clock, and from the commotion outside the hut it was evident that something important was happening. Having convinced myself that the enemy must be advancing, I sprang to my feet, and clutching my sword ran to the door. But it was nothing of the kind. Up the steep path that had been cleared through the jungle, a man was toiling on a worn-out horse. Covered with foam, lurching from side to side, panting so that we could hear him even at the distance we were from him, he made his way towards us. Who he was it was impossible to tell at that distance, but when he reached the hut a surprise was in store for us. He was none other than the young priest, whom I have mentioned to you before, His Majesty's chaplain at the citadel, Father Ambroise. I could hardly believe my eyes, and I could see that the king was equally astonished.

Having half-scrambled, half-dropped from the saddle to the ground, he staggered towards us,

pulling a letter from his pocket as he came. He handed it to the king.

'What is the meaning of this?' cried the king, turning ghastly white as he spoke. 'What is it that brings you here?'

'Treachery, your Majesty,' cried the priest. 'Her Majesty the queen bade me deliver this as soon as my horse could bring me to you. I have ridden from the capital since sunrise this morning.'

As he spoke he gave a little sigh and next moment fell in a dead faint at our feet. Du Berg and one of his aides sprang to his assistance, and having picked him up carried him into the hut.

The king meanwhile had opened the letter, and was reading it as if his life depended on it. When he had finished he seized me by the arm.

'For God's sake, Instow, come with me,' he said in a voice I hardly recognised. 'This letter contains terrible news, and I must consult with you upon it.'

I followed him to a spot in the jungle some fifty yards or so from the hut. Here he turned and faced me.

'Read that letter,' he said, handing it to me, 'and tell me what you think of it.'

I seated myself on a fallen tree and did as I was ordered. It was from Olivia, and read as follows :

'THE CITADEL, *Tuesday Night.*

'MY OWN DEAR MARIE—I have, I fear, terrible news for you. If I do not explain my meaning as well as I should otherwise like to do, remember I am writing in the greatest possible haste and in terrible distress of mind.

To-night, after you had gone, Natalie was walking upon the battlements alone. Quite by chance she sat down for a little while upon the parapet near the window of General Roche's quarters. While there, she heard him in earnest conversation with a stranger, a Frenchman, who arrived in the citadel to-day under the pretence of seeking service under your Majesty's colours. From what she overheard, they were discussing the event which is to take place at midnight to-night. How I am to tell you of such treachery, such black double-dyed villainy, I do not know. One thing, however, is evident. Roche is the traitor Instow has always believed him to be, and not your faithful servant as you suppose. His plot is as follows : At half-past twelve o'clock to-night a messenger is to arrive, presumably from you, who will report that the army has received a terrible defeat, and that the king requires the instant services of as many of the garrison as can be despatched. Under pretence of complying with this demand, the majority of the troops, certainly all those who are faithful to your throne and person, will be marched out of the citadel into the surrounding country. A messenger will then be despatched to the French commander, who is now within fifty miles of the place, coming from the east with three thousand men, and before the troops can return the capital will be in the enemy's hands. Not knowing who may be in the plot, I have written this letter, and am now sending it to you by the Padre, who is the only person in the

citadel we can trust. He will ride to the death, if need be, to deliver it into your hands; and when you receive it, you will take such action as you may think necessary. If you could only come in person, you would turn the tables on them, and we should be saved. As it is, I shall not give in while there is a man in the fortress to stand by me. God be with you, my husband.—Your devoted wife, OLIVIA.'

'What is to be done?' asked the king when I had finished reading, and handed the letter back to him.

'We must think,' I answered; 'and that quickly too. What time was that letter despatched?'

'The Padre says he left at sunrise this morning.'

'Or in other words at five o'clock. He was here at three. What time is it now?'

'Just half-past.'

'Eight hours and a half to do the return journey. Can it be done, think you?'

'It must be done,' he answered vehemently. 'Come what may, I must be in the citadel by twelve o'clock. Du Berg must find us horses, and we must start at once. I presume you will come with me?'

'You may be sure of that.'

He held out his hand and gripped mine tightly in it.

'God bless you for a true friend,' he said. 'And now for boot and saddle, and the king to the rescue. The traitors shall see with whom they have to deal.'

Five minutes later Du Berg had been informed of what had taken place at the capital, and was making arrangements to despatch a column to intercept the force that was making for the citadel from the east, and a quarter of an hour after that the king and I were on the backs of the best horses in the camp, proceeding across country as fast as our animals could take us to the rescue of the city.

(To be continued.)

ACCOUNTANCY AND ITS FUTURE.

BY A MEMBER OF THE PROFESSION.

PERHAPS one of the most interesting and at the same time significant and pressing problems of the time is the constant and increasing difficulty which presents itself to parents desirous of finding a suitable and promising occupation for their sons; such an one as will, with steady application and perseverance and a reasonable amount of ability, at least yield an adequate remuneration in years to come.

It seems a fact, as curious as it is unfortunate, that too large a proportion of the rising generation whose fathers are in business entertain some antipathy to following the same occupation, and look as a rule towards the 'professions' for their future field of labour. How far this may be due to some mistaken idea as to the relative 'dignity of labour' we need not stop to inquire; but it is not seldom the case that parents them-

selves have often a mistaken ambition to see their sons educated to some one or other of the professions by reason of the erroneous impressions they hold of its prospects, and the social position which it opens out to those engaged in it.

Something of the same feeling has extended to almost every rank and class, and as a natural consequence the lapse of time has, under such circumstances, brought about a condition of things which has resulted in a cry of 'overcrowding' (and consequently 'over-competition') which, not loud at first, has rapidly grown in intensity each succeeding year. It is not surprising therefore to find that with an increasing knowledge of these facts, and the evident continued invasion of the professions by numbers of articled clerks, a greater amount of caution and courage is being shown by those who at one time would not have thought twice had an opening presented itself for any of their sons in any of the professions. Leaving out of consideration the army, navy, and the church, and devoting more particular attention to what may be termed the practising professions, it has been for many years increasingly plain that those of medicine and law are sadly overcrowded, and that the percentage who embark in practice, and ultimately, from sheer force of competition, retire defeated, is an alarming and a growing one. It may truly be said that unless the commencing practitioner, be he doctor, barrister, or lawyer, has at his disposal sufficient independent means to enable him to wait a very considerable period for an income in the shape of 'fees,' his chances of success are small, and by degrees are growing 'beautifully less.' Of the depressing position of those who of necessity give up the struggle it is not necessary to speak at any length; their number is considerable, and, drifting back as assistants or commencing in some new and precarious sphere, they lament the chance which led them to the profession of their choice, with perhaps the added consciousness that the best years of their lives have been wasted.

With such facts as these becoming more and better known, it is not surprising that attention is being increasingly directed to one of the professions which, though not claiming great antiquity, and yet being of great and increasing importance, is not as yet so sadly overstocked—namely, that of the accountant. If we venture to indicate in some degree the scope of the work included in the term 'accountancy,' and the future prospects of those entering it, it may probably be useful to parents seeking suitable openings for sons about to leave school and commence the battle of life.

Though the profession has but lately received its present organisation, it is not of course a new one. As a separate business it can hardly be said to be more than a century and a half old; the oldest example of the word in this sense given by the Philological Society's New English Dictionary dates from 1539: 'The said Books shall be examined with the Accomptants and particular Clerkes for the perfecting of the same.' There were 'Accomptants-general' of various public

offices in the seventeenth century. The earliest specimen of the modern spelling 'accountant' given by Dr Murray is, oddly enough, from Tom D'Urfe's *Pills to Purge Melancholy* (1719), where mention is made of

A British accountant that's frolic and free,
Who does wondrous feats by the Rule of Three.

'Accomptant' is the form used by Isaac Taylor in the middle of this century; and the first example of 'accountancy' given by the Dictionary is of 1854.

The extensive and unique experience which the practice of the old accountancy gave to its members, and the knowledge of the inner workings of every conceivable class of business which they acquired, marked them out as being eminently suitable for the duties of Trustees in Bankruptcy and Liquidators of public and private companies, and to-day their duties may practically, though not wholly, be classed under the two great heads of accounts and liquidations. The magnitude and variety of the work comprised in the different subdivisions of these two chief branches is unique, and give to the accountant's profession a distinction and importance which is fast being judicially recognised. As expert book-keepers and accountants, auditors of private and public partnerships and companies, accountants to large trusts and corporations, trustees in bankruptcy and private arrangements, liquidators of companies, receivers, and arbitrators on matters of account, their services are in constant demand, and the qualifications demanded of a thoroughly capable practising accountant are as searching as they are varied; demanding, in addition to a thorough knowledge of the technicalities of the profession, a clear head, a keen perception of probabilities and possibilities, and a thorough knowledge of human nature.

How far the demand for accountancy services is progressing may to some extent be judged from the fact that in the course of the last thirty years the number of professional accountants in permanent practice has more than doubled; the membership of the Institute of Chartered Accountants alone, which in 1882 was eleven hundred and ninety-three, is now two thousand two hundred and forty-eight, whilst that of some of the other professional societies shows a similar increase. It was as a consequence of the growth of the profession, both in numbers and importance, that in 1880 a charter was granted incorporating under the before-mentioned title certain petitioning accountants and providing certain bylaws as to the qualifications to be required of future 'Chartered' accountants, and for the conduct of members of the profession. Since that time charters have been granted, under strict conditions, to several Scottish societies, and in England there has been incorporated the 'Society of Accountants and Auditors,' each and all of which exist, speaking generally, 'to raise the character of the profession and to secure for the community the existence of a class of persons well qualified to be employed in the responsible and difficult duties devolving on public accountants.' That they have, by their system of examinations and compulsory training for five years under articles, in the main fulfilled their object is undoubted, and to-day the profession

stands higher in the esteem of the mercantile and general community than ever before.

And now let us look for a moment at the future of higher accountancy. It cannot be said to be overcrowded at the present time. Seldom, if ever, does the capable practitioner want for employment, and those now commencing practice, provided they are persevering and have a thorough acquaintance with their duties, find it a remunerative and promising opening for their talents. But is it likely to be so in years to come?

The immediate future gives every indication of a great increase in accountants' work, and much of it is due to the economic conditions under which commerce is carried on, resulting, as they have done in the past and promise to do still more in the future, in an ever-enlarging volume of trade, both inland and foreign. Taking this for granted, the stress of commerce and the regulations which the law of the land imposes on those engaged in it promise to bring the expert accountant into greater need than ever before. Absolutely impartial and accurate accounts, a perfectly true adjustment of profit and loss, a correct system of costs, and the preparation of fair and complete balance sheets by independent persons, are all becoming more generally recognised as necessities in mercantile houses which have in times past worked more by 'rule of thumb'; and such are, in increasing numbers, availing themselves of the services of those who by training and experience are in every way fitted to give valuable and material assistance. Of the remarkable extension of joint-stock enterprise and the consequent increasing appointment of independent professional auditors it is hardly necessary to speak; the field is an ever-widening one; whilst the services of accountants in such matters of account as executorships, trusts, and other spheres are being rapidly and surely extended.

So far as bankruptcy and liquidations are concerned, too, the outlook is promising. There is a growing tendency to entrust the administration of estates in process of being wound up to practised accountants, with their necessarily intimate acquaintance with the details of business, rather than to the red-tape officialism of the state departments; and if present indications are anything to judge by, it is more than probable that legislation in future will lean more in the direction of the extension of non-official trustees and liquidators than otherwise. But however that may be, certain it is that the skill and training of the accountant are becoming, and will continue to become, more and more recognised as necessities in mercantile work, whilst it is probably only a question of time when the practice of the profession will be restricted, as is the case with law and medicine, to such as have qualified by articles and examinations, and subsequent membership of one of the recognised societies.

Of the question of the monetary remuneration which usually falls to the share of a qualified practising accountant it is more difficult to speak, but it may reasonably be stated that it will at least be equal to that earned by the average member of the legal profession. But it should be borne in mind that in the accountant's profession the practice which obtains amongst lawyers of terminating relations with their articled clerks,

as soon as their term of service is completed, is not followed in any degree, and an accountant is generally glad to retain the services of one who has been with him during articles. As a consequence, there is an exceptional number of fully qualified professional accountants who continue their relations under their principals; and it may safely be said that the principal values the services of those who of necessity have acquired much confidential and private knowledge as to the position of his clients. As to the remuneration of these it is hardly possible even to give an approximate idea. Between the extremes of ability will be found every grade of remuneration, but such an assistant will probably commence at a salary of about £120 to £150, rising to two or three hundred pounds or even higher, according to ability.

JUANITA.

CHAPTER V.—CONCLUSION.

On a warm, sleepy afternoon, the afternoon of an Indian summer, the train slowly wound its way through the Valley of the Thousand Springs. Ned was absorbed in conversation with his young wife. She had been asking many questions, chiefly about matters that had often puzzled her. Ned, a clever, well-read man himself, was only too glad to tell her what she wished to know, and he was struck with the clear, acute comments she made at times on the subject in hand; and he mentally smiled as he compared her with some feminine acquaintances at home, who posed as leaders in their own particular set, and who seemed to consider life was merely a routine of babbling generalities and inane vapourings, well-flavoured with the latest slang. His young mountain-beauty was natural and simple in all her ways, with a quiet dignity well suited to her perfect face and figure. Not but that there was a slumbering volcano behind that calm exterior, and Ned knew it, for this girl's warm nature, when once stirred, needed constant caressing and assurance of unchanging love from her husband.

At an exclamation from his wife, Ned looked forward and saw that the train had halted, and that the leaders were talking to the two scouts, who had fallen back with news. Hastily riding up, Dave told him that hostile Indians were reported on the adjacent bluffs a few miles ahead. A council was held, and it was decided to make camp at once. As this was to be a decoy-camp, or camp to beguile the wary hostiles, it was necessary to begin early while there was yet daylight. The animals were driven into a small space nearly surrounded by young cottonwood and alder trees, the packs were unloaded and piled in a half-circle, making a serviceable breastwork to one lying on the ground full length. At the open side of this space, some fifty yards distant, the usual camp was made, lodges erected, a fire started, and a few ordinary articles of camp use scattered about. The canvas tent was laid flat on the grass behind the barricade for Nita's comfort. An early supper having been eaten, robes and blankets were laid round the fire with willow twigs and sagebrush roughly rolled in them to represent

sleeping figures. At dusk the pack-animals were brought in and tied up behind the barricade for the night. The reason for this performance was the well-known habit of Indians to make a night-attack when possible, or rather at the first signs of dawn. The redskin believes he will be haunted by the ghosts of his victims if he slays them save in daylight, so he selects the hour of earliest dawn for his murderous attacks. Tindoy, who knew all the tricks of his race, told the party when they had lain down behind the barricade, rifles in hand, to sleep, as he would arouse them when the time came—for the old warrior was sleepless when danger threatened.

Slowly the night passed away; the great stars blazed forth in the glory only seen in high altitudes, a deep silence prevailing. Just at dawn the mournful howl of a coyote broke the stillness, answered by the low hooting of an owl. Tindoy's outstretched arm silently awoke the sleepers. He knew that the cries were Indian signals.

All of them, including Nita, lying full length behind the barricade, pointed their rifles to the front and waited. In a few minutes dark figures well defined against the coming dawn appeared; and then came an irregular fire of shots directed at the dummy figures lying round the expiring fire, a second volley being poured into the lodges. As no movement was made by the figures lying on the ground, the hostiles rushed in, scalping-knives in hand, with joyful howls, thinking they had massacred the party, and then a deadly hail of bullets from eight repeating rifles surprised them. Several fell, killed or disabled, the remainder crawled rapidly to cover, when a desultory fire was exchanged for nearly an hour. Indians much dislike fighting a concealed enemy. Some well-directed shots from Dave's and Ned's guns emptied a few saddles—for the enemy had now re-mounted and were circling round the barricade as is their custom. About this time two mounted runners came at racing speed to the attacking party, their horses blown and covered with dust. Shouting loudly to the others, the whole party rode off at a sweeping gallop. Tindoy, who was watching and listening, said: 'They are gone. The white troops are coming this way driving all before them.'

This was good news, but bad was to follow. Almost the last shot fired by the enemy had struck old Dave, the bullet entering his neck, and penetrating to the heart. He lay on his back, conscious, but evidently dying. Nita, kneeling beside him, clasped his hands in both of hers, sobbing violently, while Ned moistened the old man's lips with water. The dying man with difficulty gasped out: 'My girl! Nita! be good to her, and then he passed away, dying as he had lived in the heart of the eternal mountains. They buried him under a giant pine with a roughly-cut cross in the deep bark above him, piling up a great heap of stones over him to keep off the sneaking coyotes; and so they left him to his eternal rest, with the whispering winds as his requiem and the winter snows as a pall.

Erskine deeply regretted old Dave's tragic end. He had liked the stern old man for his straightforward honesty, and he felt sorry for

Nita's sake, for she was inconsolable at first. She had been a comrade as well as daughter to her father—had shared his pleasures and hardships—had so entered into his life and habits that she felt they must never part; and now he had left her, and lay calmly resting under the great trees. She reflected in her grief how utterly alone his death would have left her had there been no Ned to lean on and to comfort her, and she clung to her husband with increased affection, were that possible.

Dave's loss was also a serious one for another reason, and Erskine realised that the old man's prudent advice and readiness of resource in difficulties would be greatly missed. However, he had to make the best of his situation, and requesting Tindoy to continue as their guide, they started again on their march. They had not proceeded far before they were startled by a loud humming noise coming from a wide shallow gulch on their right, and the next moment they saw a multitude of mounted Indians with their squaws and equipage come madly rushing towards them, crying loudly to each other—the screaming squaws the loudest. In an instant the pack train was surrounded, and the mules swept along with the resistless horde. Ned found himself hemmed in by warriors, and Nita carried to the rear amongst the hideous squaws. It was all done in a moment, and Ned saw his valued mules scattered amongst the frenzied crowd of redskins, whose mournful cries and savage glances filled him with foreboding.

This band was the remnant of Chief Joseph's tribe, the fighting chief of the Nez Percés. They were fleeing from the white cavalry behind them, after having been badly worsted in a stubborn fight on the previous day. They numbered over a thousand in all, and were panic-stricken at the result of the last fight, when the whites, though much the smaller party, had given them a never-to-be-forgotten lesson in the famous battle of the Big Hole. They were heading for Wyoming, to hide in the rock fastnesses of the Wind River mountains. Ned vainly tried at times to edge his horse to the outside of the throng, whereupon scowling riders pointed to the front, pressing their horses against his and brandishing long knives above his head, so as to let him plainly understand he had to obey orders or lose his scalp. To his great relief, they halted at a stream, their horses blown and exhausted—for, as he learned later, they had been riding since early dawn. His pack mules were bleeding from the arrow pricks given by the Indians to keep the animals from falling behind; but he noticed with surprise and satisfaction that all were collected in one spot, and the packs unloaded in a heap together.

Ned was then led to a young pine tree, where he was ordered to sit down, two Indians binding him to the tree round the waist, but leaving his legs and arms free. They searched him, taking his arms away, and left a guard beside him. He could see nothing of Tindoy or Nita. Dread as to Nita's possible fate overpowered him. How long he sat there in his helpless despair he knew not, until recalled to his senses by feeling a hand on his shoulder. Looking up he saw a tall handsome Indian with eagle's feather in his hair standing before him. His bonds were cut

and his guard vanished. Joseph, for it was he, told him in good English to stand up, and asked him who he was and who was the white woman. Ned briefly told his story, not mentioning, however, the Indian fight of the previous night; and he explained that the white woman was his wife, making much of the fact that both were subjects of the great White Queen, and were leaving the White Father's country for ever.

Ned knew the States Indians envied their brother tribes under the rule of Canada, where difficulties rarely occur, owing simply to the fact that treaties are respected and enforced by the Canadian government. Joseph asked many searching questions as to how long Ned had been in the west? who his wife was? and where he was going with his goods? Then telling him to follow, he led the way to a distant lodge, where, squatting on the ground inside, were Tindoy and his party of four Indians. Chief Joseph motioned to Ned to sit down, and thus addressed the party: 'Tindoy, Chief of the Banaks, I have talked with this white man. He says what you said about him. His tongue is not forked. He is not one of those accused American children of the great White Father who, with lying tongues, first stole our country, promising to pay us for it and then broke their promise. They placed us on reservations, promising daily food for our wives and children and ourselves, and then through cheating agents tried to starve us, giving us tracts and hymn-books instead of flour.

'I know these white men want to wipe us out, to drive us from our land and country, where we have hunted and fished for ages; they want it all; they wish us dead.' Then fiercely to Tindoy, 'And if you, Tindoy, would only join me with your forces, we would drive these accused whites from our midst yet.' This speech was given in Indian. Then turning to Ned, he said in English: 'You are free; your wife will be restored to you unharmed, also your pack train and treasure. I have no quarrel with the White Queen's people; I only wish she ruled this country also.' Tindoy then arose, and in impassioned language urged Joseph to surrender, pointing out the absolute hopelessness of his cause.

Joseph knew that Tindoy had been taken to the chief eastern cities at government expense, to see for himself the magnitude and power of the whites, so that he might tell his restless followers on his return. Joseph wavered for a moment; then his old hatred came back and he said: 'No! I shall remain with my people and fight to the end,' and left them. A few moments later an Indian appeared and silently motioning to them to follow him, led the way to the outskirts of the Indian camp, where to their surprise they saw their own lodges and Nita's tent erected, the packs lying close by, and all their mules and ponies grazing near them, a mounted Indian keeping them apart from the other herd. Rushing to the tent, Ned found his wife lying on a pile of robes crying bitterly. 'Nita, darling!' 'Dearest husband!' came like a duet together, and she clung to his embrace and would not release him for long.

When she found they were all free to proceed

unharmed on their journey, she laughed and cried and kissed Ned all together, and took a long time to quiet down. Ere long Tindoy came in and told them that Joseph's scouts had just reported the white troops to be following another trail in their pursuit. Joseph's party having divided into two during their retreat, their chief proposed resting next day where he now was, to let the horses recover themselves. Tindoy suggested that they do the same and wait until the Indians had all gone, lest some might join them in hopes of plunder. There was no danger of the troops disturbing them, as their course led them several miles to the north of where Joseph rested, and Ned, mindful of the pricking his poor mules had sustained in the late *mélee*, agreed to wait until the Nez Percés left them.

The next day passed quietly, Ned and Nita prudently keeping within their tent most of the time. Next morning Nita stole out to the front, leaving her husband sleeping. Looking round in amazement, she found that not a trace of Indians was to be seen; warriors, squaws and papooses, horses, lodges, and all had vanished silently in the mists of morning. She quickly counted their own animals; not one was missing, and meanwhile she saw Tindoy riding slowly back to camp. He had accompanied Joseph a little distance, urging him at the last moment to send in offers of surrender; but Joseph, although respecting his kinsman's sagacity and advice, was resolute in his determination not to give in to the hated whites, and he went his way with his plucky band to endure countless hardships and privations until forced by hunger at the last to surrender.

In a few days they emerged from the last mountain pass they had to cross, and involuntarily drew rein at the scene below them, where stretched a great fertile valley green with waving crops of grain, hemmed in on every side by savage mountains. In the far distance an inland sea reflected the sunshine like a huge mirror from its motionless surface. They were gazing at the Great Salt Lake, for they were now on the outposts of Mormondom.

They were on their way to the land of constant flowers and sunshine, the land of ease and indolence and dreamy indifference to the future, to the native land of Nita's mother, sunny Mexico. Many thoughts revolved in Erskine's mind as they descended their last hill. He was face to face with the fact that a new era in his life was now in view, and as he glanced at his wife's calm face—for Nita had lately assumed a most dignified and matronly air—he reflected that the burden now lay on him to make all things easy and pleasant for her in her gradual ascent to the heights of what we are pleased to term Society. Just then Nita placed her hand on his arm and with a wistful look in her dark eyes said :

"Ned, will you do something to please me—will you?"—pausing, "will you let us be married in the church down there," pointing below as she spoke. She blushed crimson as she continued, "I know, dear, that we are legally married according to the law of the country; but Ned, darling, it is my whim—a woman's wish—will you, Ned?"

Her husband smiling said :

"Yes, of course, Nita, if you wish it. As a matter of fact we are married as legally as though the ceremony had been done by a bishop, but if it will gratify you, in a church it shall be performed."

Arriving at the busy frontier town, they rode first to the bank, where Erskine explained to the astonished manager how he had come by all his treasure. The gold was transferred to the safe, and then they proceeded to the hotel, where they proposed resting a few days before moving southwards. That same afternoon Ned called on the local minister, one of the fearless pioneers of the Church, who had dared to build his little church of logs in the very face of the Mormon zealots, who would gladly have made a bonfire of it, with the minister inside, had they dared.

The good man, on hearing Ned's story, approved his desire for a second ceremony, and they were quickly and quietly married once more, and Nita signed her name with a gratified smile, as though she had at last secured her adored husband beyond all question. And then the taciturn, faithful Tindoy left them. He sternly refused the gold offered him by Ned. Gold, he said, was his country's curse, bringing the white men to it; but he accepted Erskine's pearl-handled revolver with pride, and his men were given a goodly store of cartridges, highly valued by all Indians.

The old chief stood erect, his blanket carelessly thrown back from his right shoulder. "Good-bye, brother, sister. Tindoy is glad you are safe!"—thus he spoke with impressive earnestness to Ned. "If you see the White Father, tell him to send us agents whose tongues are not forked, and whose hearts are not black. If our treaties were respected as the great White Queen's are, there would be no war," and then with a hearty farewell, he vaulted on his horse and was seen no more.

INDIAN WRESTLING.

By H. N. M.

INDIA is indeed the home of wrestling. The science is there regarded as a fine art, patronised by the aristocracy of the land, and highly popular with the masses. The champion wrestlers enjoy a reputation as great and wide-spread as the most celebrated bull-fighters of the Spanish ring: idolised by the people, their names are on every one's tongue.

Indian wrestlers, or *puhlwans*, as they are called, belong to a hereditary class. They are a special breed of men who have practised the art, and lived by it, for generations. One occasionally hears of an outsider who may be possessed of abnormally developed muscles adopting the profession; but such is a rare exception, for the wrestler is generally trained from his infancy in exercises of a severe nature and diversified form, which have been handed down from his ancestors as the result of centuries of experience and actual practice. The efficacy of these old codes of training cannot be doubted when one sees their result in the finished *puhlwans*, as he stands erect and proud

in the arena, his masses of knotted muscles glistening with all the polish of satin.

We ourselves are so passionately devoted to athletics in every form, that it would be interesting to have the opinions of our experts upon the advantages of the native systems of training. We should undoubtedly be able to pick up some useful wrinkles from the recipes of our Aryan confrères.

The style of wrestling adopted in India is catch-as-you-can. But the conditions are such that matches with European wrestlers are rarely brought off. Some time ago an English wrestler, said to be the champion of the world in certain styles, met the private wrestler of a leading rajah, a great patron of the sport. The match came off in a large tent, and was witnessed by over three thousand spectators. The opponents faced each other, and tried for a few moments to grip each other by the back of the neck. It was done so quickly that it was hard to see how it came about; but, suddenly, the English champion was seen on his hands and knees on the ground, his opponent standing over him with one leg on either side of his body. The native then entwined his arms around the body of the Englishman, and though the latter weighed about seventeen stone, lifted him up from the ground, and seemed to test his weight. Meanwhile, the Englishman tried to manoeuvre for an advantage by twining his legs round those of his opponent, but he was no match for his dark opponent in either science or agility. The native then slipped his hands within the small drawers worn by the Englishman, and at this, the latter raised his hands and seemed to be expostulating with the judges. He had no sooner done so, however, than he was lifted up and sent revolving some ten feet away, like a ninepin, and he was again pounced on, and laid quietly on the flat of his back before he had time to gather his senses. Whether it was fair wrestling or not it is hard to say, but the fact remains that the four judges, two being British officers, at once gave a unanimous decision in favour of the native.

The oriental possesses one advantage in that his body is oiled; but this is done not so much to make him slippery as to benefit his muscles, for the oil is rubbed into the skin till its existence is scarcely perceptible. Their agility and suppleness is little short of marvellous, and it is a common sight to see a man weighing seventeen or eighteen stone turn a double somersault or walk erect on his hands, just as a preliminary, to take the kinks out of his joints. The most eminent wrestlers in India are kept in the employment of the great rajahs and princes. Though their actual pay may not be very large, they receive valuable gifts on winning their bouts. Amongst the sporting rajahs themselves the greatest rivalry exists over the prowess of their pet champions. Thus, wagers of thousands of pounds are frequently laid between two princes, each backing his own nominees. It would be derogatory to the dignity of an eastern potentate to appropriate the stakes won to his own use, so these perquisites fall to the actual victors in the contests.

A wrestler starts his professional career, as a rule, when about twenty years of age, and

retires at about forty. Sometimes, however, he leaves the ring almost before his prime, and this takes place when he has won some great and signal victory. As soon as he has thus gained some distinctive championship he avoids all possibility of his coveted laurels being snatched from him, by prompt retirement. It was reported that the young wrestler who threw the Englishman decided that that should be his last appearance in the ring; and he now solaces himself on the thought that he is the champion wrestler of the whole wide-wide world. They say that he has amassed about £80,000, and that he lives a quiet uneventful life upon the estate presented to him by his employer for his last great victory.

SHIP-BREAKING.

Of all the developments of this scientific age, the progress of modern shipbuilding is perhaps the most phenomenal. Vessels of high efficiency and most approved type can now be built at a price thought altogether impossible a few years ago. The modern steamer is of better design, has improved engines, and burns less coal than her predecessor of ten and twenty years ago; and, what is equally important, steel is much cheaper than it was, and hence the up-to-date vessel costs less to build and less to work than the older craft of our merchant fleets. Thus owners possessed of old and obsolete ships find it impossible to compete with the present creations of the builders' skill, and hence they must replace their old boats by new ones or go to the wall by stress of competition. What is to be done with these displaced vessels, many, in fact the bulk, of which are still, so far as staunchness goes, fit for many years' work were competition less keen? Some go to the foreigner, others to the ship-breaker—the nautical knacker, as he may be called.

Let us suppose that a shipowner has determined to get rid of certain of his vessels. Due announcement of such intention is given, and on a certain date the vessel is put up to auction, and disposed of to the highest bidder. Such sales are always attended by the breakers-up or their agents, ever on the lookout for a bargain; and many are the bargains they make. The price they pay for the craft they buy is, of course, a variable quantity, but that usually obtaining is from a pound to twenty-five or even thirty shillings per ton register. That mammoth mistake the *Great Eastern* brought £16,100 when sold to be broken up, and brought more than modest fortunes to several parties concerned in her first demolition. The non-professional eye may detect little difference between two steamers of approximate size in which the breakers-up are 'interested.' Not so however the parties concerned. They can gauge to a nicety the amount of copper and brass work about a vessel, and the quantity of these materials is always a factor in determining the price paid. Then too the size of the vessel's plates must be considered. The larger these are the less rivets there will be to cut through, and the greater the quantity of undrilled iron and steel obtain-

able. Hence the vessel with the larger plates will require less labour, and will besides give better material, and thus turn out a better investment. Of course it frequently happens that the shipowner prefers to break up his own vessel, and then, instead of selling her, he engages a professional breaker-up to dismantle and demolish his ship for a certain contract price. When, however, the final sentence has been pronounced, little time is lost in commencing operations. The vessel is towed at high-water, usually of a spring-tide, to some flat and more or less deserted beach, such as most of our larger estuaries can boast. She is taken as high up the beach as is possible, and then securely anchored. Then the work of dismantling begins. Cabin fittings, &c., are first disposed of, frequently by auction. Then the funnel, ventilators, screw, and masts, except those which may be needed to assist the breaking up of the vessel, are removed. By this the craft is considerably lightened, and she is now warped farther up the beach, and finally anchored; the position of her three or four anchors being marked by upright posts, warning small craft to keep clear of so dangerous a vicinity.

There is something inexpressibly pathetic in the sight of a vessel so moored, for it is impossible to see a craft which once

Walked the waters like a thing of life

in the hands of the modern wrecker without conjuring up pictures of the many storms she has successfully encountered, the crews or passengers who once trod her now deserted decks; and more dominant still perhaps is the potent commentary such a spectacle furnishes upon the mutability of human affairs, for the craft in question, useless though she may now be, represented when built the latest development of the builder's art.

Viewed by day, the scene on board a large vessel in process of being broken up is striking and animated. Sturdy workmen, perhaps to the number of a hundred, are busy wielding enormous sledges in their work of demolition or in performing other of the hundred and one operations incidental to such a business. The decks, if of wood, are torn up, thrown overboard, and formed along with other wood-work into huge rafts which at high-water are floated to land and there stacked until sold. The rivets binding the huge steel plates to the ribs of the ship are cut through, and the plates placed in positions convenient for removal. At high-tide lighters and small steam-craft come alongside, and after loading their metal freight promptly depart unless they wish to be left aground when the tide falls. All is bustle and animation, but amid the chaos of wreckage there is method and order. For the breaking up of an iron or steel vessel is now reduced, if not to an exact science, at least to something very nearly approaching it. When the various superstructures are removed the engines have to be broken up, and this is perhaps the most difficult part of the wrecker's work. The more delicate part of the machinery is, of course, amenable to the mighty sledge, but the heavier masses have to be otherwise dealt with. One method which the writer saw

employed upon a three thousand ton ship in course of demolition is exceedingly primitive. One of the masts had been left standing, and to this there was attached a strong gaff provided with a pulley. The auxiliary engines, which worked a winch, had not been interfered with, and the steam thus obtained was employed to hoist by means of a stout wire-rope a heavy mass of steel weighing nineteen hundred-weight to the end of the gaff. When in this position, vertical to the engine-room, and distant above it some thirty or thirty-five feet, the cannon-ball-like mass of metal was released to shatter and fracture the machinery and castings upon which it fell. The noise produced by the crashes of the aerolite may be readily imagined. And the work was not unattended with danger, great care having to be taken by those who manipulated the 'smasher,' to keep out of the way of the flying metal splinters. After each descent the fragments were hoisted out of the way, and all made ready for another fall of the 'bomb,' as the boss of the gang facetiously termed it.

With the close of the working-day, however, all this is changed. The vessel is deserted, save by the night-watchman, who keeps watch and ward over the disappearing hulk. The necessity for such vigilance is obvious when it is considered that there may be large quantities of valuable copper or brass, to say nothing of other 'unconsidered trifles' which a pirate dealer might attempt to remove by water under cover of darkness.

The watcher is always attended by a dog, frequently two, of the terrier species, as well to guard the ship from human depredation as to protect his master from an invasion of rats. It is usually believed that these vermin abandon a sinking ship even before the fact that she is going down is realised by her human freight. But the rodent's instinct seems clearly at fault so far as a vessel sold to be broken up is concerned. In many such vessels the rats simply swarm. It is usually the custom, when a craft is finally moored *in situ* for demolition, to detach a plate near her keel. This admits the water to the lower levels of the vessel, and consequently prevents her lifting with the rising tide. While this gives the vessel a better 'lay' it considerably circumscribes the domain of the rats; and at high-water, to the uncanny swish and surge of the water in the hidden recesses of the vessel is added the squealing and patterning of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of 'these passengers that pay no fare.' It must be remembered, too, that there is little food on board for these mischievous rodents, and their hunger makes them dangerously bold. The watchman in the boat already alluded to had a most pitiful tale to tell of how while he dozed over his fire in the galley, and his 'terrier' was ratting 'forrud,' his supper was stolen from his very elbow not once but twice on successive nights, and of it and the enveloping handkerchief he could not find the slightest trace. Even when his modest refection was enclosed in a basket, the ravenous rats frequently disturbed his snatches of sleep by savage gnawings to obtain ingress to the edibles within. Time, however, brings its revenges, and the

watchman will at length see the vessel so far cut down as to be covered at high-water, and then the rats must quit the rapidly-disappearing boat. Persons who have witnessed the exodus which then takes place describe it as a sight never to be forgotten. By scores the rats make for the shore, which may be half-a-mile or so away. There is no shilly-shallying, no waste of energy spent in swimming round their former home. They make straight for the beach, and while many of them are drowned *en route*, others, as contiguous householders bear witness, thrive amazingly amid the new conditions of life which there await them.

Sailing vessels do not often come within the province of the breaker-up. They are not 'improved' from off the active list as are steam-craft. Losses, too, among this section of our merchant fleets are of more frequent occurrence. When such vessels naturally come to be withdrawn from the active list they usually take a new lease of life as a coal or store hulk, and thus it comes to pass that they escape the attentions of the ship-breaker.

Though steam-vessels usually furnish a considerable profit to the professional wrecker, the fraternity like best to secure a good old composite man-of-war. In a Government vessel the material employed may always be expected to be of the best, and yields to the breaker-up a rich harvest of valuable copper bolting and yellow metal sheathing. These plums, however, are keenly sought after, and insure a spirited bidding when they come under the hammer.

Such, in brief, are some of the more interesting features of ship-breaking, a business which the rapid evolution of economical steam-craft has rendered quite a necessary feature of modern shipping economics.

A MODERN ALCESTIS.

CHAPTER II.—CONCLUSION.

NEXT day I went out and looked at various lodgings. Those I liked best were in a quiet little street near to the Marble Arch. It was called Old Quaint Street; and the woman who let the rooms had lost money, and cried very much when she told me about it; and the white curtains were stiff and smoky and grimy; and the passage smelt of cookery: but what were all these minor details when weighed against a principle?

I did not quite like to actually engage the rooms. Some of the timid dependence on other people's sanction still clung to me. I said I would let her know.

When I returned home I found that Captain Despard had called during my absence, and had had a long interview with my father. I do not know what they had said; but when I came home father met me quite cheerfully, and even looked a little amused.

'Well, May,' he said, 'have you found comfortable quarters?'

'Not luxurious,' I admitted, 'because, you see, I have only a hundred a year of my own, and I shall really require it all for my dress; and so that leaves very little over.'

'It does indeed,' father agreed. 'Next to

none, I should say. And are you not going any longer to honour me by drawing your allowance?'

There was a touch of laughter in my father's voice that stiffened me into instant dignity.

'I have some sense of rectitude,' I said. 'I shall live entirely on what is strictly my own. Please don't think I blame you, papa, or feel that you have ever been consciously unkind to me. On the contrary, I see, looking back, that, according to your lights, you have been a most indulgent parent.'

'Thank you, my dear,' said my father meekly, 'and may I come and see you in your lodgings?'

'Oh yes, papa!'

'And I shall be able to bring you news of the world you will have left behind.'

'Left behind?'

'Yes—of all your friends, and of what is going on.'

I looked puzzled.

'Because you may feel yourself a little shut out, you see,' continued father.

'Oh, I don't think so!' I replied cheerfully.

'Well, you don't anticipate being able to entertain much, do you?' asked father, smiling.

'No, of course not!' said I, with a mental picture of my parlour in Old Quaint Street still vividly before my eyes.

'And you can hardly go to all your parties, my dear, and return alone to your lodgings.'

'Oh—no,' I assented doubtfully, with another mental vision of a beautiful new ball-dress that had been sent home only yesterday.

'You have thought of all this?' asked father.

'I had not quite realised it,' I answered honestly.

'I fancy you have not realised many things yet, my child,' said father.

'Oh, I did not expect to have nothing to give up!' I responded cheerfully. 'A pioneer does not tread on rose leaves! Do you suppose I shall miss all my engagements more than I shall miss you, daddie?'

'I know that I shall miss my little daughter!'

I felt my lips quivering, but I managed to ask: 'What shall you do, papa?—I mean who will?—'

'Oh, I shall ask your Aunt Jane to come and look after me while you are away.'

Now my Aunt Jane I thoroughly detest. I know it is wrong; but I can't help it. She does interfere so! Ever since I came home from school, five years ago, it has been a continual struggle to show her that I prefer to manage things in my own way, and consider myself capable of doing so unaided. Many is the tussle I have had with her, and she usually has had to retire discomfited, with a sniff and a muttered allusion to her young days. And now to think that *she* would come and be mistress in my house, and order my servants, and—oh! this was the last straw. But I made up my mind to endure it. One can endure anything for the sake of a principle.

I went to my lodgings at the end of that week. I will draw a veil over my parting with my home. I went round and looked at all the dear rooms, and at the books in the library, and at each of my beloved things. I

went last into my own little boudoir with its pink hangings, and unlocked my box of treasures, and burned a quantity of old letters. It struck me as curiously like what Alcestis had done. I remembered that she had gone round her house and said good-bye to everything. I think at the last moment I would have given it up but for the remembrance of that quizzical look of father's, and of what Captain Despard would say. I nerv'd myself with thoughts of this. I had a farewell interview with my old nurse, Tabby. She has been with us ever since I can remember. She was strangely unfeeling.

'I'm sorry indeed that you've quarrelled with your pa about the young captain, Miss May. Pas is arbitrary. But just you keep true, missie, and he'll come round, as sure as they does in the play.'

So that was the version in the servants' hall! Well, could not explain, so I let it be. It was perhaps unjust to father.

I got into my cab and drove away. I took twelve boxes and cases in all, besides several little pieces of furniture and pictures, and odds and ends. My biggest dress box would not go in at the door, and had to be unpacked out in the street, and sent back empty. I could so easily have got into it and been taken safely home again!

It took me several days to unpack and then repack—because there was not room for anything. Then I 'did up' my sitting-room, and put my books and pictures about, and filled the vases with cut flowers, and made the place look—well, better. But it was lonely in the evenings! I went out in the afternoons and paid several calls on several bosom-friends. I explained to them about Alcestis, and how wrong it was for women to submit as they did. They all laughed at me, and I was glad to be able to prove to them that I was in earnest, by telling them about the lodgings. That made them open their eyes; but they were more concerned with their own affairs than with ~~mine~~, and soon ran on with their chatter. How to all it was!—the flower-show—the so-and-so's dance—Meta's engagement. I sat and listened. A week ago I should have joined in readily enough. A week ago I was certainly intending to fulfil every one of the engagements they were discussing—except, of course, the matrimonial ones. How interested they all seemed in matrimony!—as if marriage were the most important thing in the world, except dress. I went home feeling rather 'out of it,' as father had expressed it.

Then came a spell of wet weather, and I spent my days at the window watching the street below, and the tops of the umbrellas of the passers by, and listening to the continual whirr of the machine of the little dressmaker who lived above me, and to the strumming of the poor girl who lived down-stairs with her widowed mother, and gave music lessons. These days were decidedly dull and conducive to pessimism; but I learnt to talk to myself a good deal. 'In order to carry out your high ideals,' I said sternly, 'you have to learn to forego frivolous society and the pleasures that have hitherto proved sufficient for you. So be

it. Life contains other pleasures—higher ones. You must seek these.'

So I went to Mudie's, and came home laden with recent novels.

Father appeared one evening. He explained that Aunt Jane was very conscientious, but not a stimulating companion; and so he had walked to see how I was getting on. He smoked a cigar, at my request, and he talked a good deal about Britain's attitude towards the opium question; but he gave me no account of all Aunt Jane must have been doing in the house—and he never even mentioned Captain Despard's name.

When he got up to go, he looked round my room as if he had suddenly seen it for the first time.

'So this is where you live?' he asked.

'Yes,' I said.

He shrugged his shoulders and kissed me.

I ceased to pay calls. What was the use of going and listening to people whose lives were so different from my life? I even stopped attending our usual church; it would look so weak to sit in the family pew. I went on visiting my district, though. The poor have such simple ways of looking at things. It never occurs to them to question existing facts. The great problems of life that confront us do not seem to trouble them. There was one poor woman in my district whose husband was out of work, and the way that woman sobbed when she told me of how he came home to her, night after night, footsore and disheartened, after having tramped miles in answer to some advertisement only to find that some other applicant had been chosen. I saw the husband once. He looked a nice, well-built, honest lad. The wife tried to seem cheerful when he came in, and poked up the little bit of fire, and began to spread out some wretched apology for a meal. I went away and drove round to every one I could think of, including the Charity Organisation, to ask for work for that man. But the courtesy of this century cannot stand the strain if you interfere in either business matters or with sport; and I got no help for him. Finally I went to my father's chambers.

'Tut, tut!' he said. 'Why should you be undertaking this man's taste of Hades for him?'

'Oh yes, of course, the whole system is wrong!' I cried. 'But meanwhile these people are unhappy! Think of the poor wife, father! She says he has always been so kind, and worked so hard for her, and now she is afraid his courage will break down. And she is ill herself.'

'No doubt. She should have been as sensible as you, my dear, and declined the part of Alcestis.'

I went away dejected. But that evening I got a note from father. 'Have sent a clerk round to see your protégées and find it all as you say. Have given him work and sixteen shillings a week. Will you reward me by coming to the theatre to-morrow night. Do you regard the Haymarket as a form of Hades?'

Dear father! How good he was! And what a treat the theatre would be! And how happy that poor little wife would feel by now! I ran up-stairs to shake out one of my crushed evening dresses that I had not worn for so

long, and I laid out my opera-cloak and fan and gloves, and felt quite light-hearted.

Father fetched me. The play had begun when we arrived. When we were sitting in our box father handed me his opera-glasses. The very first thing I saw, before I raised the glasses to my eyes, was Captain Despard sitting with a group of people in the stalls. I hastily levelled my glasses to the stage, and became absorbed in the play. Captain Despard did not look once in my direction; he seemed engrossed in conversation with the lady next him. There were two of his fellow-officers with him, and an elderly man, and three ladies. Captain Despard talked mostly to a dark-haired girl on his right, who was quite pretty. He put on her cloak for her when they came away. I caught sight of them all in the hall as we came out; but Jack was rushing about trying to get some one's carriage, and did not see us. We had to wait quite a long time for ours.

'Well, did you enjoy it?' father asked.

'And I told him it had been delightful.'

Father left me at my door. How cold and squallid my little room looked when I got back! And that fire was out again! I wondered if Jack had gone to supper anywhere with them.

The following day an irresistible desire came over me to see my own dear home again. It was now almost two months since I had left it. Two months!—two whole months of living by myself and for myself. How miserably lonely old age must be to one who has not managed to form ties in youth—ties that neither fading beauty nor flagging spirits and failing health will loosen. Yes, love is what we ought to earn and to hoard in youth; it is better provision for old age than is any balance at the banker's. I would go and see Aunt Jane—poor Aunt Jane! Perhaps I had wronged her. She had not much to live for; it was exceedingly natural that she should be disagreeable.

How familiar it all looked when James flung open the front door! The rush of warm air from the spacious hall, the big doors with their carved wooden handles, the soft carpet on the broad, shallow staircase—how familiar it all was!—and yet how strange. I felt as if I had been away a life-time. And now I was in the dear old drawing-room again, with the screens and pictures, and the piano, and the easy chairs, and the blazing fire, and—and all my flower-vases empty! Not a flower in the room!

Aunt Jane received me with her customary duplex kiss.

'I am glad you have come, though you have been a long time making up your mind to do it. However, I can well understand your reluctance.'

'Now don't scold me, Aunt Jane.'

'Well, in my opinion, it is just a good scolding you want. But as I have promised—I mean, well—let us change the subject.'

But I was too occupied in covertly looking round at everything to heed what she said. There were but few changes, little things I could easily alter—but of course they would never be altered.

Aunt Jane gave me some tea. She was using the wrong set—the little Dresden one that I thought too small for comfort.

Then some other callers came—friends of Aunt

Jane's—and seemed to take her position quite for granted, and hardly noticed me. I went away soon after, and was sorry I had gone at all.

When I reached my lodgings that fire was out again, and the place looked horrid. I felt too tired and depressed even to ring a bell to have the fire re-lit. The bell would summon only Alice, with smudged face and cap askew. Still, it was stupid of me to sit down and cry; and it was more stupid of me, after I had cried for one hour by the clock, to bathe my eyes and go for a walk in the gathering dusk, in order to let the cool air cure my headache. Did all reformers feel as wretched as I felt that afternoon? I hurried along one of the broad walks of the Park, with the lights of Park Lane dancing behind its railings, and felt that I could not go back to that wretched, hateful little room. I bought some flowers from a woman who was standing with a basket at a street corner. You can always have a touch of mystic refinement when you can possess flowers. The woman had a baby in her arms, and child clinging to her skirt.

'Are they both yours?' I asked involuntarily. She seemed little more than a girl.

'This one is, miss,' she answered, smiling down at the sticky infant in the shawl; 'but that'—glancing coldly at the little shivering child—'is a neighbour's. She left it.'

'Left it?'

'Some ladies got her a place, and she pays me to keep it.'

I put some money into the little child's cold hand, and she looked up at me with big, wondering, grieved eyes.

I hurried on to a deserted corner of the Park. It was now raining fast, and the path was deserted. I did not put up my umbrella, for I had forgotten it. I did not mind getting wet: I did not mind catching cold. There was no one who would care. I sat down on a seat under a tree, and watched the rain gathering into little pools at my feet.

Some one emerged out of the mist and walked slowly past me, and then suddenly stopped, turned, and came quickly back. I sprang up—it was Jack Despard.

'May I?' he exclaimed; and I knew in a moment that it was all right.

Jack had a big umbrella, and he sat down by me and held it over us both.

'What is the matter, darling?' he said. 'Nothing,' I answered, turning my face away; 'it is the rain!' And then, because I was nervous, I said the one thing I did not mean to say. 'I saw you at the theatre last night.'

'Yes; and I saw you.'

'Did you? I thought you didn't.'

'You never looked at me.'

Well, that was fair; and after a moment we both laughed.

'Do you know it is eight weeks and four days since we met?' he asked.

'Really?' I answered airily.

'And how long is it to be till we meet again?'

I did not answer, but I felt his hand take mine, and I left it.

'Is it to go on like this?' he asked.

Still I did not answer.

'Is it to go on like this?' he repeated.

'No, dear,' I murmured.

I don't know what made me say 'dear'; but it sounded quite natural at the moment. Only—I did not quite foresee the immediate consequences.

'Perhaps Alcestis liked going there for him,' I whispered presently.

'But he was a brute to let her!' answered Jack.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

SIR JOSEPH LISTER, who, through his great discovery of what is known as antiseptic surgery, has been the means of saving tens of thousands of human lives, naturally included a review of his work in his recent presidential address to the British Association at Liverpool. He recalled the time when a surgeon did not fear evil consequences from a badly fractured limb half as much as he did the putrefactive changes which would probably occur in the wound itself. And so much was this the case that Mr Syme—whom Sir Joseph Lister described as 'the safest surgeon of his time'—was inclined to think that it would be better, on the whole, if all compound fractures of the leg were subjected to amputation, without any attempt to save the limb. Soon after this, carbolic acid, at that time a chemical curiosity, was found to have a deodorising effect upon sewage, and Sir Joseph determined to try the effect of the same agent upon wounded flesh. The experiment was entirely successful, and surgery was at once placed upon an entirely new footing, making operations for the alleviation of human suffering possible which in previous times would never have had a chance of success. Sir Joseph Lister also dealt in his address with the jubilee of anaesthesia, and with the most recent advances in surgical practice made possible by the employment of the Röntgen rays. The British Association will meet next year at Toronto, in 1898 at Bournemouth, in 1899 at Dublin, while the last year of the century will probably find it at Glasgow.

Every one knows how common it is in country districts to see horseshoes nailed against the doors of barns and cottages, as a harbinger of good-luck. This old custom has lately come under notice in a paper on the 'Folklore of the Horseshoe,' read by Dr Robert Laurence before the American Folk-Lore Society. He believes that the custom of nailing up horseshoes originated in the rites of the Passover, the blood sprinkled on the doorposts and the lintel at the time of the great Jewish feast marking the chief points of an arch, which is reproduced in the form of the horseshoe. It is also possible that the custom is also traceable to the idea that the horse brings luck, for in legendary lore the animal has often been credited with supernatural gifts.

There is a greater demand now for the product of the india-rubber tree than has ever been known, the tires of the ubiquitous bicycle and other vehicles alone consuming an immense quantity. Everything regarding the substance is therefore of real interest to many, and Sir Henry Derring's recent report on the rubber industry as

carried on in Mexico will find many readers. The methods of its collection in Nicaragua, and the profitable nature of the industry, are fully discussed in the article, 'Out with the India-rubber Gatherers,' on a previous page.

A newer source of india-rubber is Lagos—an industry which is considered, according to the *Kew Bulletin*, one of the most remarkable instances of rapid development that has taken place in recent years in any British colony. A plant growing wild, *Kickxia Africana*, was found, two or three years back, to yield a valuable rubber, and this substance is now in great commercial demand. The beginning of the industry was marked in January last year by the exportation of twenty-one thousand pounds of this rubber, valued at £1200. From a recent return communicated to Kew by the government of Lagos, the total exports of the material for the year 1895 amounted to more than five million pounds (two thousand two hundred and sixty-three tons), with a value of nearly £270,000. The collection and preparation of the rubber is effected by native labour. Only a year or two back a rubber industry was started with the same success at the Gold Coast, and it is now second only in importance to that of palm oil. Sir Harry Johnston, in his latest report on the British Central Africa Protectorate, is in hopes that this industry will be greatly developed there in the future. Rubber is there produced from three species of *Landolia*, one or more species of *Ficus*, and by a shrub recently discovered and named *Tabernuemontana elegans*.

Scenic representations at theatres are becoming more and more realistic, and stage erections, or 'sets' as they are technically called, are consequently of a most elaborate character, often involving a very long wait between the acts for their preparation. At the Court Theatre at Munich this difficulty has been met by a device which will probably become common in theatres so soon as its advantages are sufficiently known. The stage there consists of a huge circular platform which can be rotated by electrical mechanism. On this stage four separate set scenes can be built up, each occupying a quarter of the circle, so that when the time comes for changing the scene, the stage is caused to give a quarter revolution and a new spectacle is brought before the audience in the short period of eleven seconds. As the house is darkened during the actual change, the means employed to bring it about are not visible. It may be mentioned that at Drury Lane Theatre, London, arrangements have been made by which the entire stage can be raised or lowered by means of a hydraulic lift—an innovation which will give scope for scenic effects never before possible.

It is said that a new kind of roofing material is being produced at a mill in Christiania, Norway, in the shape of imitation slates, which are made of compressed wood-pulp and rendered waterproof by a secret process. The new slates are black, not easily broken, of light weight, and are cheap. In short, they possess every advantage of the best slates now in use.

In an article in *Symon's Meteorological Magazine* some curious particulars are given concerning the running dry on various occasions of the river Thames between the years 1114 and 1716. This

was, of course, long anterior to the establishment of the many locks on the river, which would render such an event impossible now. In the first year named: 'There was so great an ebb everywhere in one day as no man remembered before, so that men went through the Thames, both riding and walking, east of London Bridge.' In 1158, in consequence of an earthquake, 'the river of Thames,' according to *Stow's Annals*, 1615, 'was dried uppe, that all London might walke over the same dryshod.' In 1591 the river was again so dry that a man could ride over it on horseback near London Bridge. In 1687 a great storm of wind blew down the valley of the Thames and kept the waters back so that its bed was dry, a thing which happened again on 14th September 1716. On this last occasion the river 'was driven to so low an ebb,' says the *Weekly Packet*, 'that both above and below the bridge people passed and repassed on the sands, which lay so clearly bare to view that a silver tankard, a silver-hilted sword, a gold ring, a guinea, and several other things were taken up that had been lost there.'

Paper has been put to a variety of uses, but its most curious employment is foreshadowed in the recent patenting of a blotting-paper towel. The idea is that a person on stepping out of his morning bath, instead of rubbing himself dry in the orthodox manner, should envelop his body in a towel made of blotting-paper, which will, without trouble, and in a few seconds, absorb all the moisture upon his skin. The idea is ingenious, but it does away with that wholesome friction which many believe to be so beneficial to the skin.

In the year 1849 some quarrymen discovered at Monsummano, near Lucca in Italy, certain caves which are so hot and moist that they can be used as Turkish baths, and attention is now being directed to the place as a health-resort. The place was visited by Garibaldi and Kossuth for relief from rheumatic affections, it having been found by the inhabitants that the caves were beneficial for such complaints. The caves occur in a porous rock, and the air, saturated with moisture, attains a temperature of eighty-eight degrees Fahrenheit.

There is a scheme on foot for the establishment in London of an immense terrestrial globe, eighty-four feet in diameter, which will show the various countries and seas on the earth's surface on a scale of about eight miles to an inch. The globe would be enclosed in a cylindrical building with a spiral gallery all round its interior, the edge of which would conform to the contour of the model world. This would slowly revolve on its axis, so that every part of it would be open to inspection. It may be remembered that a globe of half this diameter was exhibited at Paris in 1859, and that a few decades back London had a globe as one of its permanent attractions. This used to stand in Leicester Square, a quarter of the metropolis which is now almost monopolised by gigantic music halls. It is very doubtful whether the establishment of such a globe in London at the present day would pay its enormous expenses, for the taste of modern holiday-makers does not lean towards such a grave study as that of geography.

Ever since it was shown that the diamond

was only a somewhat rare form of carbon, and possessed the same chemical composition as a bit of plebeian charcoal or coke, attempts have been made to make the gem artificially, so that it might be produced in greater profusion than it is from the grudging laboratory of nature. M. Moissan, the eminent French chemist, has attacked the problem in a fresh way. He dissolves carbon in molten iron in the intense heat of the electric furnace, afterwards cooling the product under pressure, when the carbon separates in the crystallised form. Thus he produces true diamonds; but they are minute, and are by no means clear and beautiful like the brilliants so prized by jewellers. They are, moreover, costly to make, so that possessors of diamonds need have no fear of a reduction in the value of their holdings by reason of artificial competition with Kimberley. But with the artificial production of rubies it is different, for these gems can now be made of sufficient size to be used in jewellery. Many methods have been suggested for the accomplishment of this end, one of the best consisting in submitting to a high temperature a mixture of alumina, potassium carbonate, and calcium fluoride.

A little-known industry is the manufacture in Italy of the citrate of lime, from which the citric acid of commerce is made. The process adopted is as follows: Spoilt lemons, or those of such inferior quality that they are not good enough for export, are deprived of their juice, which is mixed at a temperature of eighty degrees with sufficient washed chalk, or whiting, to form a paste. The acid of the juice combines with the lime, and the bags in which the mixture is placed are subjected to heavy pressure to get rid of the useless, extraneous moisture. Next, the white paste is spread out in drying chambers until it crumbles to powder, and in this form it represents citrate of lime. The compound is subsequently treated with dilute sulphuric acid, and after filtering, the liquid is exposed in shallow trays to crystallise by spontaneous evaporation. An ounce of citric acid produced in this way is equivalent to about a pint of lemon juice.

A railway of unique form will probably be opened to public use before these lines appear in print. It is known as 'The Brighton and Rottingdean Sea-shore Electric Tramroad,' and will doubtless form an extra attraction to a favourite seaside resort. The railroad is laid on the foreshore, which here consists of hard chalk, and its average distance from the cliffs is about two hundred yards: it is just three miles in length. At low-tide the rails, four in number, can be plainly seen, bolted on solid concrete blocks, mortised into the chalk rock, but at high-tide they will be covered by fifteen feet of sea, but will be still available for use. There is but one car, but it is of special construction, and will carry about two hundred passengers. It is somewhat like an ordinary street tramcar, and at the same time like the deck of a yacht. It is supported on four massive tubular legs twenty-four feet above the rails, so as to allow for the rise and fall of the tide, and it carries two electric motors, which are actuated by means of an overhead cable running the entire length of the rails.

These motors actuate the wheels by means of shafting passing through the hollow legs of the car, each leg terminating in a big foot which constitutes a bogie carriage with four wheels. The system will offer all the benefits of a short sea voyage, without that distressing penalty which so many have to pay.

We have all been taught that brown bread, containing the bran of the wheat, is more nourishing than white, which in the refined process of milling now in vogue loses much that it would be desirable to retain. Mons. A. Girard, at a recent meeting of the Paris Academy, combats this view, and declares that the more delicate article is in every way quite as nutritious as the coarser. Another article of faith with regard to white bread is that it does not contain the necessary amount of phosphoric acid to keep the human organism in good health. M. Girard meets this objection by observing that bread is not the sole staff of life, and that if it were, the difference in the amount of acid furnished by the two sorts is unimportant. Eggs, milk, cheese, and potatoes and vegetables generally supply between them far more phosphoric acid than we get from bread, either white or brown. Physiologists say that to preserve health a man would require 3·29 grains of the acid daily. M. Girard asserts that by analysis of the food of labourers in some of the poorest districts of France, he has found as a rule quite double that amount to be consumed.

When all our tramcars, at present drawn by horses, are replaced by mechanical carriages, a large number of cumbrous vehicles will be rendered idle, and the companies will be confronted with the question, 'What shall we do with them?' Perhaps they will take a hint from what occurred not long ago in Connecticut, when horse traction on the street lines was largely superseded by another system in the various cities of that state. Some one suggested that the obsolete horse-cars might be utilised as summer cottages, hunters' camps, lodges, &c., and the idea was taken up with such readiness that now none of the old cars are to be had. Some campers-out have utilised three or four cars, using them as temporary country-houses, by planting them so as to form four sides of a square, with a canvas top stretched over the enclosed space.

In June last an expedition started with the object of exploring Central Australia. It is not generally known that there is an unexplored region in that vast island continent six times the area of England. The great difficulty of pushing into this *terra incognita* has always been its waterless character. The new expedition, under the command of Mr L. A. Wells, is provided with camels, and equipped with all necessaries.

The most powerful lighthouse in the world is now in course of erection at Penmark Point on the western coast of France, about forty miles south of the place where the *Drummond Castle* was wrecked a few months ago. The tower will have a height of sixty-three mètres, and in clear weather the light will be visible for a distance of a hundred kilomètres. The light will not be of the ordinary revolving kind, but will be governed by new apparatus, and will be emitted in flashes lasting the tenth-part of a second. This principle is based on the observation that lightning, which

has a much shorter duration, makes a distinct impression upon the retina. The flashes will occur every five seconds. The Penmark lighthouse will cost £24,000.

In connection with the publication of Mr Garner's new book on Monkeys and Chimpanzees, and researches into monkey language, and 'Monkeyana' on a previous page, it is worth recalling that the late Sir Richard Burton has a prior claim to the discovery of the monkey-tongue, and had formed a vocabulary of no less than sixty 'words,' or twenty more than Mr Garner professes to have classified.

Burton whilst in India was seized with a fit of misanthropy, and preferred the society of monkeys to that of men. Lady Burton tells us that he collected forty monkeys of all kinds, and lived in daily companionship with them. One was his doctor, another his chaplain, another his secretary, and so on. They sat at meals with him, and were gravely waited upon by his native servants. It was then that he made his study of the monkey language, but unfortunately his carefully-compiled vocabulary was destroyed in the fire at Grindlay's repository.

A SONG IN LATE AUTUMN.

The blackbirds call from laurel cover,
Their sweet spring songs forgotten now,
And those old days are all passed over,
The lover's kiss, the lover's vow.
But oh, sweetheart, though storms may shatter
And blow the barren branches bare,
Though all the sweet flowers fall and scatter,
'Tis not as though they never were :

For every flower that summer cherished,
By wood or meadow, vale or hill,
Though long ago it drooped and perished,
In memory's garden blossoms still :
Buds of all seasons blow together,
Blooms gathered from every part,
There comes no frost nor wintry weather
Within the garden of the heart.

And one fair figure ever lingers,
A goddess in that garden green,
With roses in her slender fingers,
And crowned with roses, like a queen.
A limpid pool no frost can harden
Reflects her face, so fair to see,
She is the queen of all the garden,
And oh! true-hearted, thou art she !

S. CORNISH WATKINS.

** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.
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